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## FOREIGN AND INSULAR.

### *Reports from Rio de Janeiro—Plague, smallpox, and yellow fever.*

Acting Assistant Surgeon Stewart reports, December 15 and 22, 1903, as follows:

During the week ended December 12 I inspected and issued bills of health to 3 vessels leaving here for the United States, viz: The steamship *Thetis* for New York, steamship *Rosebank* for Port Arthur, Tex., and steamship *Albuera* for New York, via Bahia, Brazil.

The *Thetis* was disinfected last week at Ilha Grande Quarantine Station, and as the *Albuera* was sailing direct from here to other Brazilian ports she was disinfected here in the bay by the Brazilian sanitary authorities by means of sulphur gas generated in a small furnace on a disinfecting barge alongside.

None of these vessels carried any passengers except the *Thetis*, which is one of the regular Lamport and Holt boats. These ships carry both first and third class passengers, but, as stated in a former communication, emigration is very light at this time of the year.

The weather has been somewhat cooler during the past week, and there has been some rain, which was very much needed.

### *Mortality report—Plague and smallpox cases under treatment.*

Total deaths from all causes for the week ended December 12, 1903, 361; yellow fever, 0; variola, 26; plague, 21; pulmonary tuberculosis, 62; malarial fevers, 16, and leprosy, 1. Total number of plague cases under treatment in the Paulo Candido Hospital, 74; total number of cases of variola under treatment in Sao Sebastiao Hospital, 82.

### *Report for week ended December 19, 1903.*

During the week ended December 19, 1903, only 1 vessel left this port for the United States, namely, the barkentine *White Wings*, from here for Baltimore, with a cargo of coffee. This vessel and crew were inspected by me, and a bill of health was issued.

The weather has been cooler this week than during the week preceding, and there have been several rather heavy rains, lasting for some hours, which have flushed out the surface sewerage and helped to flush out the underground sewerage also.

### *Comparative statistics—Sanitary conditions.*

[Circular—Translated.]

In the month of November the total number of deaths was a trifle less than in October, 1,441 as compared with 1,499. The daily mortality was also, of course, a trifle less, 48.03 against 48.36.

The sanitary condition was altogether a little better. In regard to variola and plague, which may be considered epidemic, the mortality from the first named was reduced from the mortality in October. Comparing the two months, November and October, we find the following differences in the mortality from the principal infectious diseases:

Yellow fever, 2 deaths as against 2 in October; plague, 98 as against 87 (an increase); variola, 131 as against 152; measles, 15 as against 8; scarlet fever, 2 as against 0; whooping cough, 4 as against 1; diphtheria, 4 as against 2; grippe, 28 as against 58; enteric fever, 2 as against 6; dysentery, 2 as against 6; beriberi, 7 as against 6; leprosy, 2 as against 1; malarial fevers, 67 as against 74; tuberculosis, 247 as against 275.

The central disinfection headquarters received during November 264 notifications of cases of plague, 206 of variola, 8 of measles, 4 of yellow fever, 1 of diphtheria, 1 of leprosy, and 9 of tuberculosis, in comparison with 243 of plague, 218 of variola, 6 of measles, 8 of yellow fever, 5 of diphtheria, and 14 of tuberculosis received during the month of October, 1903.

Of the 264 notifications of cases of plague, 210 cases were confirmed by bacteriological examination.

The number of disinfections done during the month was 807. In addition 5,491 pieces of clothing were disinfected and 1,536 pieces were burned.

The mosquito brigade cleansed 282 localities where there had been deaths from yellow fever during the last two epidemics. They also destroyed 101 foci of mosquito larvæ, and isolated 1 person suffering from the disease.

The representatives of the public health office made 41,589 domiciliary visits, 23,656 of which were made by the health officers themselves, or their representatives, and the remainder by the ordinary police.

According to information received by the director general of public health, the number of vaccinations against plague reached the number of 1,670. During the previous month there were 1,692 such inoculations.

Up to November 30, 15,104 rats had been destroyed.

Disinfection has been made in certain rain-water conduits and on board of some ships, viz: Vessels leaving here bound northward for Brazilian ports. Those bound southward are disinfected at Ilha Grande Quarantine Station. The disinfection is done by means of a sulphur furnace in a barge.

Of the patients isolated in the Paulo Candido Hospital, the hospital to which cases of bubonic plague are taken, 31.37 per cent died during the month of November. The percentage of deaths falls to 21, if we deduct from the number of deaths the number of those who died after being there less than twenty-four hours.

There were under treatment in this hospital 126 cases of plague, and in the Sao Sebastiao hospital there were treated during the month of November 121 cases of variola; none of yellow fever.

Isolation for cases of yellow fever was formerly compulsory by regulation, although as a matter of fact it was very rarely practiced except in the cases of the indigent and of those who desired it or whose families desired it. It is no longer compulsory.

During the preceding month there were 108 cases of plague in the Paulo Candido hospital; 100 cases of variola and 1 case of yellow fever in the Sao Sebastiao hospital.

The thermometer registered  $36.8^{\circ}$  C. as the highest and  $18.3^{\circ}$  C. as the lowest, with an average of  $23.92^{\circ}$  C. for the month.

The fluctuating population during the month, taking into account those arriving and departing by land and sea, is placed at 6,157.

*Mortality for the week ended December 20, 1903.*

During the week ended December 20, 1903, there were in all 311 deaths. Of these 1 was due to yellow fever, of which disease there was 1 case; 7 were due to bubonic plague, of which disease there were 13 cases reported during the week; 37 were due to variola, of which disease 71 cases were reported during the week; 9 were due to malarial fevers, 60 to pulmonary tuberculosis, and 2 to leprosy. This shows an amelioration of the plague conditions here.

*Deaths from plague in past five weeks.*

November 22, 22 deaths; November 29, 21 deaths; December 6, 22 deaths; December 13, 21 deaths; December 20, 7 deaths.

In the Paulo Candido hospital there were 55 cases of plague under treatment, and in the Sao Sebastiao hospital there were 105 cases of variola under treatment.

No deaths from plague were reported in any of the 13 districts into which the city of Rio de Janeiro is divided, all deaths having occurred in the hospital.

COLOMBIA.

*Establishment of leper asylums.*

Minister Beaupré reports from Bogota, November 5 as follows:

One of the gravest questions now confronting Colombia is the terrible one of leprosy. This awful disease has invaded the country to an alarming extent, and extraordinary measures have become necessary to check its spread.

I inclose herewith a copy and translation of a law enacted by Congress, under which lazarettoes are to be established in each Department of the Republic, in which all the lepers are to be confined. Various other provisions are made, but the central idea is to isolate all those who are suffering from the malady.

For the Department of Antioquia a lazaretto is already operated at an expense of more than 3,000,000 pesos, and much other good work has been done in various sections by private efforts and subscriptions. The stipulations and appropriations of this new law will encourage further efforts on the part of societies and individuals.

*Law 28 of 1903—October 20.*

LAZARETTES (LEPER ASYLUMS).

ARTICLE 1. The duty of creating a leper asylum within the territory of their jurisdiction, of collecting and isolating in it all the lepers that may reside in their territory is imposed on the Departments.